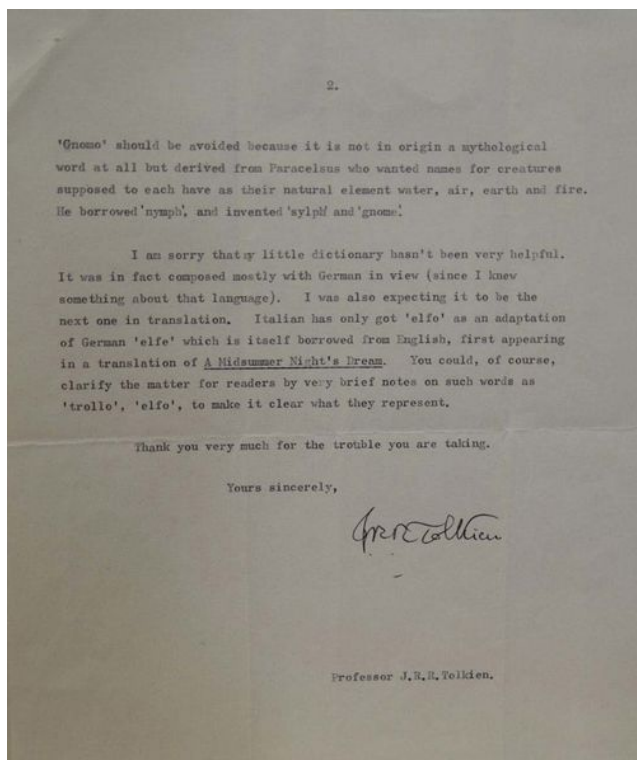


Koller Auktionen - Lot 149*

A164 Books - Saturday 23 March 2013, 10.00 AM



Tolkien, John Ronald Reuel, Schriftsteller (1892-1973).

Maschinenschr. Brief mit eigenh. Anrede u. Unterschrift.

Oxford, 14. Juni 1973. 4°. 2 eins. beschr. Bll.

Inhaltsreicher Brief an die italienische Übersetzerin des "kleinen Hobbit", Elena Jeronimidis: "With regard to the names of mythological creatures, elves, gnomes, trolls etc., it is I think no use trying to search for words in another language to translate them. I should have thought it would be best to do what English (for example) has done: simply borrow the words with slight adaption to the language of translation. The actual story must then reveal to the readers what kind of creatures

Koller Auktionen - Lot 149*

A164 Books - Saturday 23 March 2013, 10.00 AM

they are."

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Koller Auktionen - Lot 149*

A164 Books - Saturday 23 March 2013, 10.00 AM

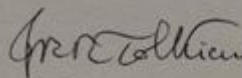
2.

'Gnome' should be avoided because it is not in origin a mythological word at all but derived from Paracelsus who wanted names for creatures supposed to each have as their natural element water, air, earth and fire. He borrowed 'nymph', and invented 'sylph' and 'gnome'.

I am sorry that my little dictionary hasn't been very helpful. It was in fact composed mostly with German in view (since I knew something about that language). I was also expecting it to be the next one in translation. Italian has only got 'elfo' as an adaptation of German 'elfe' which is itself borrowed from English, first appearing in a translation of A Midsummer Night's Dream. You could, of course, clarify the matter for readers by very brief notes on such words as 'trollo', 'elfo', to make it clear what they represent.

Thank you very much for the trouble you are taking.

Yours sincerely,



Professor J.R.R. Tolkien.